

TAKING A HOME INVENTORY:

Go to askdora.colorado.gov and click on "Division of Insurance." The Home Inventory Checklist will help you document proof of ownership for the items you would include on an insurance claim. You will also find a link to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' online and SmartPhone applications.

Areas and items you should assess in a home inventory include:

- **LIVING ROOM:** Furniture, artwork, entertainment center, electronics, curtains, etc.
- **DINING ROOM:** Furniture, china, clock, crystal, silver, chandeliers, etc.
- **KITCHEN:** Furniture, cabinets, chairs, tables, large appliances, small appliances, linens, pictures, silverware, dining set, etc.
- **FAMILY ROOM/DEN:** Furniture, bookcases, tables, chairs, electronics, artwork, decorative items, etc.
- **BEDROOMS:** Beds, dressers, stereo, TV, clothing, collectibles, etc.
- **BATHROOMS:** Cabinets, vanity, electric appliances, curtains, towels, etc.
- **MISCELLANEOUS:** Air conditioner, bicycles, camera, exercise equipment, holiday decorations, jewelry, tools, washer & dryer, etc.

Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies
DIVISION OF INSURANCE

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Dora
Department of Regulatory Agencies

Disasters and Insurance: Are **YOU** Covered?



A complete guide on how to prepare your family and your home for an unexpected event, and what to do when your property is damaged.



**Consumer protection
is our mission**

- **Disasters can strike any time, any where**



The best time to review your renters or homeowners policy is **before** disaster strikes. This brochure from Colorado's Department of Regulatory Agencies ("DORA") is a tool to help consumers answer common questions about finding the right insurance policies to cover their home and possessions.

BEFORE DISASTER STRIKES...

Wildfires, floods, tornadoes and other forms of natural or human caused emergencies can leave a trail of devastation. Rebuilding a home after adversity is expensive and can take time. Before disaster hits, you should:

- **Keep an inventory** of your belongings and email it to yourself and your closest loved ones.
- **Have your insurance information available electronically** so that you may find it in your email or online easily in case paper documents are destroyed.
- **Assess your home and property** to make sure your insurance coverage and policies are up-to-date.
- **Scan receipts for your most valuable items** and keep those as well as electronic images of such valuables available via email.
- **Have a plan to communicate and reunite** should your family be separated during a disaster.



ABOUT US...

The **Colorado Division of Insurance** regulates the insurance industry and assists consumers and other stakeholders with insurance issues. Consumer protection is our mission at **DORA**.

Staff responds annually to an estimated 26,000 telephone calls, e-mails, letters and walk-in visits from consumers. Coloradans are always welcome to contact us for assistance with an issue.

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Are YOU Covered?

SEVERE STORMS

In Colorado, it has long been said that if you do not like the weather at the moment, just wait 10 minutes, it is likely to change. Weather systems rolling off of the foothills can gain momentum and send lightning storms across the front range. In severe weather season (May through September), it is not unusual for funnel clouds and tornadoes to drop out of the sky, or for a quick warm-up to melt off snowpack with



intensity. Thanks to a seasoned team at the National Weather Service, local broadcasters relay Tornado or Flood Watches and Warnings with efficiency and accuracy. Residents are often warned before severe weather hits; however, there is not much we can do to stop potential destruction. If you find your home or

possessions are damaged due to a storm, remember that you are likely not alone in contacting your insurance company. Be patient, but persistent: Many times, multiple victims are trying to get help at the same time. To get the claims process moving smoothly, follow the preparedness tips on the inside front of this brochure. With the varied weather we can expect at any time in Colorado, it is in every resident's best interest to do what he or she can ahead of time to be prepared before disaster strikes.

Quick Tip: Store your home inventory list, copies of receipts and photos of all your valuables somewhere online — such as in your email — so you may access them easily when needed.

WHAT TYPE OF DAMAGE IS COVERED?

Damage caused by wind, wind-driven rain, falling objects, or the collapse of a structure due to the weight of hail and debris are all types of situations covered under most standard homeowner policies. Interior water damage (when there is no damage to the roof or walls), damage as the result of a flood, removal of fallen trees (if the trees do not land on and damage your home), backed up drains or sewers, and food spoilage due to a power outage are situations not usually covered by most standard homeowner policies. You may have the option to purchase ahead of time additional coverage for these events.

As for **FLOOD INSURANCE:** "High and dry" Coloradans may think they are safe from the threat of floods, but trusting the whims of Mother Nature and going without a flood insurance policy leaves renters, homeowners, business owners and their valuables at risk.

More than one-fourth of damages due to flooding occur outside high-risk areas, and about one-third of all claims paid on flood insurance are not in a flood plain.

Colorado floods cause significant damage, and not having flood insurance may prove costly to those in the path of the next flood. Residents of Colorado need to know that their homeowners and renters insurance policies do NOT cover flood damage. Homeowners and renters — whose communities participate in the federal government's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) — must purchase separate flood insurance to be covered against loss. Flood insurance can be purchased through most licensed property/casualty insurance companies and is backed by the federal government. In most cases, the agent who handled an individual's homeowner insurance can also write a flood insurance policy under arrangements with the **Federal Insurance Administration**. The government sets the amount that is charged for premiums, so there is no need to comparison shop based on price.

WILDFIRES AND YOUR HOME

Each year, wildfires threaten homes and personal property. Residents in the mountains and foothills, or near dry grasslands, should be aware of potential danger. Wildfire damage is covered under most provisions of a basic homeowner policy, including the loss of a structure or property to fire; smoke damage to

the structure and its belongings; damages that occur from fire retardant drops; and costs to stay elsewhere if you are evacuated.

Read your policy and talk to your agent to make sure you have the right amount of coverage for your home.

REDUCING POTENTIAL DAMAGE

- Use fire-resistant materials in the structure of your home, especially the roof, which is especially vulnerable.
- Clear a safety zone around your home and remove trees, leaves, brush and pine needles. Clear a perimeter of at least 100 feet, but 200-500 feet is recommended.
- Remove overhanging tree branches from around your home.
- Be sure propane and fuel tanks are at least 30 feet away from all structures.
- Acquire a water storage tank if you do not have access to a fire hydrant.
- Have garden hoses long enough to reach all areas of your property.
- Change the batteries in your smoke detectors every time you change your clocks with the time change.
- Make sure your street address is easily visible from the street so emergency responders are not delayed.



REPLACEMENT COST VS. ACTUAL CASH VALUE

Read your policy and talk to your agent to make sure you have the proper coverage for your property. Know ahead of time whether your policy is set up to cover contents on a "replacement cost" or an "actual cash value" basis.

- **REPLACEMENT COST** coverage will pay what it actually costs to replace the items that are lost, minus the policy deductible.
- **ACTUAL CASH VALUE** coverage will pay only for what your property was worth at the time it was damaged or destroyed, minus the deductible.

Replacement cost coverage will cost more in premiums, but it will also pay out more if you ever need to file a claim. Be sure your policy reflects the type of coverage you want for your home and personal property.

Also, if you have unique valuables — such as jewelry, furs and firearms — your homeowner policy may limit coverage of those items, and you will want to make sure you have an endorsement for such items.



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